

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SESSION

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SENATOR BERT K. STEDMAN

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Vallenar Road Project Moving Forward

I am very pleased to announce that Governor Walker's administration has recently placed the [Vallenar Road Project](#) out to bid. My office worked closely with the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry to move this project forward.

This road project will not only provide access to Southeast State Forest land units for timber sales, but will also provide access to private lands in Vallenar Bay. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the University of Alaska also own tracts of land near the new road and I am hopeful that potential timber sales will occur on these lands too. The project starts just north of the Ketchikan International Airport on Gravina Island and follows the Tongass Narrows north then turns west towards Vallenar Bay. There are 8.4 miles of new road construction and 1.1 miles of reconstruction and upgrades for existing roads.

I was able to secure funding for this project in 2012 as the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. In that year's capital budget I fought to place several Roads-To-Resources projects in the budget for Southeast Alaska including \$5 million for this project; \$40 million for the Kake-Petersburg Road; \$2.5 million for the Mill Access road on Gravina Island, and \$5 million for digital mapping and reconnaissance of future road corridors. As Chairman, I was also able to secure \$19 million for the Shelter Cove Road in a general obligation bond package. These efforts are now creating economic opportunities for our region at a time when they are sorely needed.

The [Southeast State Forest](#) was established 2010 with the passage of [HB 162](#) and was expanded in 2011 with the passage of [HB 105](#). I supported both of these efforts during the legislative process as a member of the Senate Resources and Senate Finance committees. I firmly believe that preserving a sustainable working timber industry in Southeast Alaska provides multiple benefits to our economy.

Thanks again to Governor Walker and the Department of Natural Resources for making this project a priority and performing the necessary work to get this project out to bid. As employment in several sectors of our economy declines, it is incredibly important to continue moving projects over the finish line to generate local jobs and economic development. It is a great privilege to work alongside Governor Walker to encourage the development of Alaska's renewable resources.

For more information, please Chief of Staff Randy Ruaro at (907) 465-3873.

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